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TAGS: [MOPS](#) [MCAP](#) [PHUM](#) [PGOV](#) [PTER](#) [PINS](#) [PNAT](#) [IZ](#)
SUBJECT: NATIONAL POLICE DETAINED FOR SUNNI MOSQUE BOMBING

Classified By: A/POL-MIL COUNSELOR APAR SIDHU FOR REASONS 1.4 (A/B/D)

¶1. (C/REL MNF-I) SUMMARY. On June 9, Iraqi Security Forces detained two National Police commanders for possible involvement in the June 8 bombing that damaged the Sunni Al Fattah Pasha mosque in Baghdad,s Al Bayya neighborhood. The bombing follows two recent high profile cases of sectarian attacks against Sunnis allegedly involving the National Police in West Rashid. This mosque attack also comes after a week of calls from Sunni leaders -- such as Vice President Hashimi and Deputy Prime Minister Zubaie -- to the Prime Minister and Iraqi Coalition leaders complaining of intensifying danger in the largely Sunni enclave of West Rashid,s Al Bayya and Al Amil. END SUMMARY.

West Rashid,s Al Bayya Security

¶2. (C/REL MNF-I) Al Bayya is a predominantly Sunni area located in the West Rashid District. It has experienced high levels of violence at the hands of both Jaish al Mahdi (JAM) militia and Al Qaeda. Under the Fard Al Qanoon security operation, the Al Bayya area has been patrolled by U.S. military units, Second Iraqi Army Division battalions comprised largely of Kurds, and units from the National Police,s First Division. At the time of the mosque bombing, the Iraqi army units in al Bayya were being replaced by other units from the northern-based Second Division and additional National Police units from the First Division were moving in.

Sunnis Warn of Trouble

¶3. (C/REL MNF-I) Sunni leaders including Vice President Hashimi, Deputy Prime Minister Zubaie and Adnon Dulaimi had recently made a series of calls to Iraqi government and military leaders, as well as Coalition and embassy officers, complaining that security was deteriorating in Al-Bayya and Al Amil neighborhoods. They attributed an increase in Shia militia activities to the influx of more National Police and the rotation out of Kurdish Iraqi Army units. Coalition leaders emphasized that Iraqi army forces were not being replaced, but merely rotated, and that the selected National Police were not, as the Sunnis reported, from the infamous National Police &Wolf Brigade.8

Detention of National Police Officers

¶4. (C/REL MNF-I) Within twenty-four hours of the mosque

bombing, Iraqi security forces detained a platoon and a company commander of the National Police, s First Battalion, Third Brigade, First Division. Their forces are responsible for the security of the mosque. These men remain in Iraqi custody. The Coalition battalion commander has visited the area and spoke with about 200 citizens about the situation since the bombing. He has also met with the National Police Lieutenant Colonel charged with defending other mosques in the area and told him that his honor was at stake and he must protect them.

15. (C/REL MNF-I) The possibility that National Police may have been complicit in the bombing and the subsequent detention of National Police officers for questioning, Sunnis will likely increase their calls for the removal of National Police units from their communities and continue to argue that Fard Al Qanoon is failing them.

16. (C/REL MNF-I) COMMENT: Despite our efforts to reform8 the National Police, the task seems far from complete. We are encouraged, however, that the Iraqis quickly detained National Police officers who may have played a role in the Al Fattah Pasha Sunni mosque bombing. This attack follows two other high-profile assaults against Sunnis involving the National Police in West Rashid. In February, members of the Second Battalion, Third Brigade, First National Police Division allegedly raped a local woman. In May, Second Brigade, First National Police Division personnel allegedly committed extrajudicial killings of civilians while operating outside their duty area. The Iraqi officers who were detained in the Al Fattah Pasha mosque bombing were from the First Battalion, Third Brigade of the same First Division.

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